

Transition Alliance Program Continuation Request Fiscal Year 2007

I. Review of TAP Programming

The purpose of the Transition Alliance Program (TAP) is to develop and implement a new pattern of service to youth with disabilities. The goal is to increase successful employment through collaborative efforts. Youth participating in a TAP require assistance in developing skills to be successful in obtaining, maintaining, and regaining employment. Youth participating in a TAP will develop:

- Self determination skills;
- Job specific skills;
- Work habit and related soft skills;
- Skill in applying their rights in employment based upon the Americans with Disabilities Act;
- Skill in navigating the adult service delivery process;
- Job seeking skills;
- Job keeping skills;
- Skill in obtaining employment with the necessary assistance of the TAP staff; and
- Proficiency in applying skills in the world of work.

The target population for the TAP is youth with disabilities **who are eligible and actively receiving services through the Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS) program**. The design of each TAP program must be tailored to the individual needs of the student and provide the necessary training and support for the student to be employed. Students who do not need assistance in the targeted areas identified above are not appropriate candidates for a TAP program. **TAPs will provide to students based upon need:**

- Supported employment coordination and training;
- Job coaching;
- Job development;
- Job seeking skills training;
- Job keeping skills training
- Job specific skills training;
- Competency based skill training in specialized industries;
- Community and/or Youth resource mapping;
- Coordination and collaboration with youth, parents, service providers, community resources, and specialty teams to maximize resources and minimize duplication of services;
- Training in the Americans with Disabilities Act;
- Training in work related services to include work habit and soft skills training;
- Training and education in navigating the adult services and use of resource maps;
- Training in self determination and self advocacy;
- Job related services necessary to obtain, maintain, and regain employment;

- Educational coordination utilizing the Post Secondary Option;
- On the job training in the community; and
- Maintain regular contact with the youth to address issues and needs through the follow along and follow up period.

A. Partnership

The TAP is a collaborative partnership between the local educational representative (i.e. district, AEA, community college, etc.) and the local office of the Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS). Technical assistance is provided by the local IVRS Counselor and monitoring of the program is completed by the local IVRS Supervisor. The TAP program should be developed and implemented with close collaboration of the IVRS Counselor, who then reports status activities to the local IVRS Supervisor. Supplanting of transition activities required under IDEA (Individual with Disabilities Education Improvement Act) is not allowed. Community resource mapping activities help identify the needs in the local areas that TAPs serve. IVRS and TAPs are assured that comparable services and benefits are utilized to maintain compliance with the Rehabilitation Act by utilizing information gained through resource mapping. This process will maximize resources and minimize duplication of services, which will maintain a reasonable cost structure and program efficiency.

II. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

A. Applicants:

Local Education Agencies, consortiums of LEAs and Area Education Agencies and community colleges are eligible to apply.

B. Proposal Packet:

All applicants must submit a Proposal including two Cover Sheets and two Face Sheets with original signatures, Proposal Budget Form, and prepare a Budget Narrative describing all costs identified on the Budget Form.

C. Match:

The match for this agreement is 50/50. Since the local school district, designated district in a consortium, community college, or Area Education Agency assumes fiscal responsibility for the contract; personnel from the business office should be included in the fiscal planning. Local agreements involving interagency services, or financial contribution can be coordinated to support and **enhance** TAP activities. **In-kind match cannot replace the match requirement.**

The applicant will certify non-federal matching dollars to IVRS as follows. The applicant will operate the TAP and pay all expenses according to the approved budget. On a monthly or quarterly basis (Monthly is preferred) the applicant will prepare a payment voucher for the preceding period. The payment voucher will itemize all expenses of the project for the month and required supporting documentation must be available upon request. The voucher will contain the following statement **“The funds used to pay the expenditures certified herein are non-federal funds and these funds have not been used to match other federal funds”**.

A person authorized to do so by the applicant will sign the voucher. The voucher will be sent to the IVRS Supervisor for review and approval. The voucher is next submitted to IVRS Financial Section for release of payment.

The Financial Section will process the voucher and make payment to the applicant based on the match rate agreed to in the contract. Since the TAP match rate is 50/50, IVRS will pay the applicant 50% of the amount of total expenses listed on the voucher.

To summarize, the applicant will certify non-federal match by reporting actual expenses, for the project, to IVRS. No cash payment to IVRS for matching purposes is required at this time.

D. Funding Levels:

Each proposal will be evaluated according to the viability of the project and the projected budget to support the efforts. If a project is recommended for funding, but the budget appears excessive or details of the program need to be clarified or revised, the applicant would be requested to submit a modified proposal.

E. Contract Period:

There is an opportunity to seek a two year or one year contract.

The Contract is to be submitted with the collaboration of the IVRS Counselor and Supervisor by June 20, 2006 to the local IVRS Area Office. If the Contract is approved for only a one year time period, (or if the school district only wants to apply for a one year contract) then the TAP will be provided the opportunity to apply for a continuation request at the end of the first program year. The One-Year Annual Contracts are renewable yearly, starting on the first of October of one year and ending the thirtieth of September of the next year. The Two-year Contract would be renewable, unless a termination notice is provided, starting on October 1, 2008. The continuation request must be submitted by **June 20** of each new contract year. The two-year contract will start October 1, 2006 and end September 30, 2008.

For consideration of an annual or two year Contract, a continuation request is required. All contracts will be reviewed and scored. Decisions for awarding two-year versus one-year contracts will be based on scoring and the Risk Assessment completed.

F. Termination Clause:

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services, at its discretion and based on review of contractor's performance and availability of funding, may discontinue the funding by giving thirty days written notice to the local education representative. The TAP may, at its discretion, discontinue the project by giving thirty days written notice to IVRS Contract Administrator.

G. Program Flexibility:

Since this program is continuing to evolve and is developed to respond to the needs of students in transition it is understood that the program may evolve and change. As modifications and revisions in program requirements or programmatic concepts emerge each project will be notified. Each year that a project applies for a continuation it is expected that the project will address the revisions in the original program and the timeframe such revisions are expected to be completed.

Projects interested in making changes in service delivery plans must receive prior approval from IVRS by submitting a written contract amendment. The IVRS Counselor and Supervisor must approve modifications prior to submitting it to the IVRS Bureau Chief.

H. Subcontracting:

Subcontracting is only allowed for students who receive supported employment services. TAPs must identify if subcontracting will be used. TAPs must submit supporting documentation and claim for supported employment each month/quarterly (monthly is preferred) that the services are provided. Subcontracting costs for supported employment will follow the IVRS Menu of Service Outcome Payment system. At no time other than for supported employment is subcontracting allowable under the terms of this grant. Subcontracting requires the TAP to

submit a copy of the subcontracting agreement that identifies the following milestones as outcome payment points:

- Referral
- Placement Report
- Supported Job Coach Assessment Report
- Stabilization – Status 22
- Written Report of Student Status at 45 days after stabilization
- Written Report at 90 days after stabilization – Status 26

I. Monitoring:

Oversight of contract compliance will be performed monthly by the IVRS Supervisor and on site reviews will be performed as necessary based upon the following risk assessment process:

Program Issues: Contract Manager has reasons for concern based on, but not limited to, the following problem indicators:

- Consistent failure to meet projected outcomes
- Supplanting
- Consistent failure to meet projected goals, priorities, RFP expectations
- Ongoing data requirements not being met
- No evidence or limited evidence of collaboration with identified partners
- Poor satisfaction survey results
- Complaints received regarding program service
- Failure to contract staff to perform the specified functions
- Previous problems without clear evidence of improvement
- Review of contract close out or transition to alternative service arrangement
- Failure of project to increase the number of clients served by IVRS
- Failure of project to comply with IVRS eligibility or Order of Selection requirements
- Failure of project to use and apply the technical assistance provided by VR staff
- The contractor is already legally responsible for providing services that the project is providing (supplanting)
- Services being provided under the contract are also being authorized and paid through VRAP
- Failure of project to meet or exceed number of cases closed rehabilitated from previous year
- Failure of project to efficiently or effectively provide rehabilitation services
- Failure to provide services in a cost effective manner
- Contract closed and replaced with alternative service arrangement
- Fiscal year closed out with outstanding issues unresolved

Financial Issues: IVRS Financial Section has reasons for concern based on, but not limited to, the following problem indicators:

- Unallowable costs
- Incorrect claims
- Lack of supporting documentation
- Line items over budget without an amendment
- Audit report issues
- Subcontractor issues
- Previous problems without clear evidence of improvement

J. Letters of Support:

- Letters of support must be submitted from the following:
- County CPC or Department of Human Services Case Management;
- Special Education Director/School Administrator;

- Employer Representative
- Certification of Approval from the IVRS Area Office Supervisor

The certification of approval from the IVRS Area Office Supervisor must indicate strong support for the TAP, evidence that the TAP has met program outcomes, and agreement to monitor the project monthly. The letter of support from the Special Education Director or School Administrator must include:

- **Statement that supplanting is not occurring in the project and if it occurs IVRS will be reimbursed for The Agency's portion of the supplanted activity.**

K. Supplanting: Supplanting is not allowed. Supplanting is defined as any activity or responsibility that the contracting party (LEA, AEA, Community College) or affiliate is legally required to provide.

L. Program Definitions:

- **Active Participants:** TAP youth who are VR eligible and actively receiving Vocational Rehabilitation services and engaged in obtaining and maintaining employment. Active Participants does not include those individuals identified in the follow-along and follow-up categories. They are tracked through those specific categories.
- **AEA:** Area Education Agency
- **Competitive Employment:** Paid work in which an employer/employee relationship exists. The employee receives a commensurate wage that is at or above minimum wage and the work is performed in an integrated setting so that the youth has regular contact on the job with individuals who are not disabled. Added medical insurance and benefits are earned in accordance with that awarded to all employees in the business.
- **IVRS:** Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- **Double Dipping:** Is an unallowable activity in which the local TAP is paid for a service or program and the IVRS counselor authorizes for the very same service for a client that is also in the TAP project.
- **LEA:** Local Education Agency
- **Follow Along:** at least quarterly contacts made by TAP personnel during the first year after IVRS has successfully closed a file as rehabilitated (Status 26-0).
- **Follow Up:** at least yearly contacts made by TAP personnel after follow along are completed until the youth reaches the age of 25.
- **Job Related Instruction:** Can be provided in a variety of settings including coordinated specialized job skill classes, job clubs, mentoring programs, job coaching, or community based experiences. Instruction focuses on vocational skills such as career exploration, job seeking skills, and job keeping skills as well as self-determination training and job coaching. It could also include instruction in social and independent living skills areas since deficits in those areas often lead to an inability to obtain or maintain employment.
- **On the Job Training:** Students placed in a job where training funds that have been allocated in the TAP Contract are used to pay for training support with the employer.
- **RFP:** Request for Proposal
- **Risk Assessment:** A risk assessment is performed by the local supervisor/Contract Manager, or a member of the IVRS Administrative Financial team to determine if the TAP has demonstrated non-compliance actions that prompts a more formal on site monitoring.
- **Selective Placement:** Student needing job development services with short term job coaching.
- **Status 22:** IVRS term used to describe when an individual has received substantial services and is employed in a position matching the Individual Plan of Employment and rehabilitation closure is anticipated in ninety days. If on the job or supported

employment is part of the training, the file would not move to status 22 until stabilization is reached and agreed upon by all parties.

- **Supplanting:** Supplanting is not allowed and is evident when the TAP performs a function that is required by the local district or educational agency under IDEA.
- **Supported Employment:** An employer/employee relationship exists in which the student is paid for work performed in an integrated, competitive work environment, with continued job coaching support at a minimum of 2 hours per month after stabilization, and is compensated for work performed at a commensurate rate that is at or above minimum wage. Long-term job coaching support is arranged for and agreed to by the long-term support program. This could also include natural supports that are developed on-site with the employer.
- **Successfully Rehabilitated (Status 26-0):** Occurs when the IVRS counselor determines that the youth has been placed in competitive employment and the job has been stable for a minimum of 90 days, and no longer requires intense monitoring, the file is considered a successful closure.

III. PROPOSAL PROCESS

A. Timetable:

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| • TAP Continuation Application Request | March 31, 2006 |
| • Districts Submit Proposals through IVRS Supervisor | June 20, 2006 |
| • Supervisor Submits Approval and Risk Assessment | July 15, 2006 |
| • Meetings with IVRS Supervisor/Counselor/TAP staff
revisions identified and completed contract is submitted | July 15, 2006 thru
August 31, 2006 |
| • IVRS Administrator's Approval | September 15, 2006 |
| • Contract begins | October 1, 2006 |
| • Contract ends | September 30, 2007
or
September 30, 2008 |

B. Continuation Request:

The following sections must be addressed by the continuation request:

1. Community Resource Mapping -

The TAP Continuation Applications must include:

- Identified strengths and weaknesses of the mapping process as it was used during past year
- Description of new mapping activities planned and the partners involved. For continued program improvement, efforts should be made to regularly review community needs and identify potential new or existing partners that should be involved.

2. Student Matrix

The following information is in accordance with outcome reporting requirements of the Accountable Government Act and must be provided for the previous contract year (2005-06 school year results) along with projections for the next contract year (2006-07 and 2007-08 school year.)

The following information must be provided in the continuation application identified with a cumulative total in a matrix format. The reporting period for all student outcomes from this past contract year will be from 6/1/05-5/30/06. You are reporting on all students who received TAP services during the 2005/2006 school year students. Please, also, provide a cumulative total for

all years' data was collected. Please identify the student participants by name, IVRS case number; date started in TAP, and whether presently in high school, date of high school graduation or drop out date. (This can be reported as part of the student matrix)

- Summary of numbers of students receiving services:
 - Students accepted in TAP (start date for TAP)
 - Students receiving services in TAP while currently in high school
 - Expected graduation date of those students
 - Number of students who dropped out of high school
 - Number of student who received their GED
 - Number of students participating in the Post Secondary Option Program
 - Students who received Selective Placement involving short term job coaching
 - Students who participated in Post Secondary Training and a breakdown of length/type of training
 - Students who were involved in community On-the-Job Training Programs
 - Students participating in supported employment and corresponding service provider (i.e. TAP or name of Community Rehabilitation Program Subcontractor);
 - Students participating in supported employment and identification of each milestone achieved in the Menu of Service program for supported employment (i.e. Referral, Placement Report, Supported Job Coach Assessment, Supported Job Stabilization, 45 Day Report, 90 Day Report);
 - Students employed and in IVRS status 22 (currently-at time of completion of this report), with reported wage
 - Students participating in Follow Along services, Follow Up services with reported wage and number of hours worked
 - Student's employment status prior to beginning TAP with reported wage and number of hours worked
 - Student's employment status at time of graduation with reported wage and number of hours worked
 - Students discharged from the program
 - Students aged out of the TAP.
 - Add brief comment/explanation on student matrix as necessary to clarify information

Identification of number of students to be served in the following: IVRS is in a priority of services situation and thus is mandated to serve all most severely disabled individuals. In the following table summarize the number of individuals that the TAP has served and project for future contract years. This should be included under the heading of **Identification of number of students** in your program narrative.

2005-06 Year	2006- 08 Year
_____ Students accepted into TAP and receiving services as new TAP Students	_____
_____ Total Number of active students served by TAP during year	_____
_____ Total Number of students served by TAP during year	_____
_____ Number of students closed as successfully employed, status 26	_____
_____ Number of students in Supported Employment Services (must be MSD)	_____

3. Work Plan

The purpose of the Work Plan is to identify changes that will create program improvement and meet the employment needs of the students. The following criteria should be reported:

- **Progress on identified goals from the 2005-2006 Contract. Please identify the goals/objectives and report on progress towards completion. Include an**

analysis of customer satisfaction. This should also include a review of employment outcome data.

- **Identify 2006/2007 & 2007/2008 Goals/Objectives.** Please identify specific measurable goals that will be implemented related to program improvement and delivery, action steps/strategies that will be used to accomplish the goals and timelines for implementation and evaluation measurement. Goals should be measurable with a clear outline of how the results will be evaluated. Benchmarks should be identified in order to measure progress towards your overall goals and objectives. These benchmarks will be reported on at the end of the first year for those with two-year contracts.

A focus should be on activities increasing the involvement of the business community with the student and how business and industry are engaged in activities to increase employment opportunities.

4. Budget and Budget Narrative: a detailed line item budget with a narrative explanation identifying only allowable costs is required.

a). Submit a budget which includes line item expenditures for year one (10/1/06-9/30/07); a line item budget for the second year (10/1/07-9/30/08) (necessary for those seeking a two-year contract) and a total operating budget for the length of the contract.

b). Individual line item amounts that exceed the overall total budget would require a line item amendment. Any amount exceeding the total contract amount figure would require a Contract Amendment.

c). At the end of the first year, it is requested to identify revisions necessary to accurately reflect the anticipated total operating budget for the second year. Any increases in the overall contract amount would be subject to approval from IVRS.

d). A Narrative Explanation for line amounts is required. For budget items related to Professional Development, please provide an assurance that requests for Out of State travel will be submitted to the Rehabilitation Services Bureau Chief two months in advance of the anticipated date.

e). Please remember that if a subcontractor is used for Supported Employment Services, only the following services may be subcontracted not to exceed \$5000

D1 Referral	\$90
D2 Community Work Site Assessment Developed	\$430
D3 Community Worksite Report	\$140
D14 Transportation Training	\$80
D15 Job Development	\$1240
D20 Supported Job Coaching Assessment Report	\$100
D21 Supported Job Coaching Stabilization	\$1370
D22 Supported Job Coaching 45 day	\$370
D23 Supported Job Coaching 90 day	\$230

5. Letters of Support

- Letters of support must be submitted from the following:
- County CPC or Department of Human Services Case Management;
- Special Education Director/School Administrator;
- Employer Representative
- Certification of Approval from the IVRS Area Office Supervisor

The certification of approval from the IVRS Area Office Supervisor must indicate strong support for the TAP, evidence that the TAP has met program outcomes, and agreement to monitor the project monthly. The letter of support from the Special Education Director or School Administrator must include:

- **Statement that supplanting is not occurring in the project and if it occurs IVRS will be reimbursed for The Agency's portion of the supplanted activity.**

6. Employment Outcome Narrative

A Program Narrative will be required at the end of the first program year (by June 20th submitted to the local IVRS Supervisor) for those TAPS with two-year contracts. The Narrative would include progress towards identified benchmarks, justification for any changes in goals and objectives or expected outcomes. If revisions or changes were needed in the identified budget for the second year, they could be identified at this time. A student outcome matrix would also be submitted.

C. Evaluation:

Proposals will be evaluated as identified below. Projects will be funded on the basis of merit and as funds are available. TAP proposals will be evaluated upon the consideration of the following key areas and point scales:

- Community Resource Mapping **(Maximum of 10 points)**
 - Strengths/Weakness Identified (5 points)
 - Additional needs identified and plans for new activities for program improvement with description of partners involved (5 points)
- Student Reporting **(Maximum of 25 points)**
 - Student matrix accurately completed consistent with IVRS records (15 points)
 - Identification of # of students table (5 points)
 - Students Served meet projected goals (5 points)
- Work Plan **(Maximum of 45 points)**
 - Analysis of employment outcome data (10 points)
 - Narrative report completed on 2005/06 goals/ outcomes (10 points)
 - 2006-2008 goals identified impacting continued program improvement/employment outcomes (10 points)
 - Action Steps/Strategies identified to accomplish goals (10 points)
 - Timelines, measurements/benchmarks established (5 points)
- Budget and Budget Narrative **(Maximum of 10 points)**
 - Budget totals are accurate and cost efficient (5 points)
 - Description of budget items are provided (5 points)
- Risk Assessment **(Maximum of 10 points)**
 - Risk Assessment as completed by IVRS Supervisor/Financial Review Team does not identify any serious concerns without clear evidence of a plan to resolve identified issues
- Letters of Support **(Maximum of 10 points)**

D. Exclusions and Exceptions:

IVRS does not consider verbal responses by a staff person from The Agency to be binding. All questions must be submitted in writing to IVRS. All responses from IVRS will be posted on the IVRS website and will be binding. IVRS reserves the right to make amendments to the RFP and will issue those amendments on the website or in writing each year within the text of the RFP. Written questions may be submitted to: David.Mitchell@iowa.gov. IVRS reserves the right to retract the RFP in whole or in part at its sole discretion. IVRS acts as the final authority in all Transition Alliance Program (TAP) matters.

E. Non Appropriation:

Notwithstanding anything in this contract to the contrary, and subject to the limitations, conditions and procedures set forth below, IVRS shall have the right to terminate this contract without penalty by giving thirty (30) days written notice to the Contractor as a result of any of the following: (1) the legislature or governor fail to appropriate funds sufficient to allow IVRS to operate as required and to fulfill its obligations under this agreement; (2) if funds are de-appropriated or not allocated; (3) if IVRS' authorization to operate is withdrawn or there is a material alteration in the programs administered by IVRS; and (4) if IVRS' duties are substantially modified. In the event of termination of this contract due to non-appropriation, the exclusive, sole, and complete remedy of the Contractor shall be payment for services completed prior to termination.

F. Assurances:

The Contractor and the IVRS, by their signatures on the contract, assure that each contractor is operating in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local statutes, rules and regulations.

G. Independent Contractor:

The status of the Contractor, and all subcontractors, shall be that of an independent contractor. IVRS shall not provide the Contractor with office space, support staff, equipment or tools, or supervision beyond the terms of this Contract. Neither the Contractor nor its employees are eligible for any State employee benefits, including but not limited to, retirement benefits, insurance coverage or paid leave. Neither the Contractor nor its employees shall be considered employees of IVRS or the State of Iowa for federal or state tax purposes. IVRS shall not withhold taxes on behalf of the Contractor (unless required by law). The Contractor shall be responsible for payment of all taxes, fees and charges when due.

H. Application Process:

Submit two original Continuation Requests with original signatures on each Cover Sheet and each Face Sheet to the local IVRS Area Office Supervisor of the local TAP for initial approval and risk assessment. The local office Supervisor will submit the approved continuation application for contract implementation. The preference is to receive copies of the written information via electronic communication when possible.